

We Claim:

1. A sports ball including a hand placement guide disposed thereon for indicating proper hand placement for a person's hands for effecting a release of the ball, the guide including:

5 a first image of a release hand including a representation of the hand's palm and fingers;

the representation of the palm having first indicia indicating that the person's palm should not touch the ball.

2. The sports ball of claim 1 wherein the representation of the fingers has second indicia indicating that the person should release the ball with the three middle fingers of the release hand.

3. The sports ball of claim 2 wherein the representation of the fingers has third indicia indicating that one of the fingers should be the last of the three middle fingers touching the ball at the end of the release.

4. The sports ball of claim 1 wherein the representation of the fingers has indicia indicating that the person should control the ball with the tips and pads of the finger.

5. The sports ball of claim 2 wherein the second indicia includes markings disposed on the representation of the three middle fingers, and a legend explaining the markings.

6. The sports ball of claim 3 wherein the third indicia includes a marking on the representation of the one finger, and a legend explaining the marking.

7. The sports ball of claim 1 where the ball is a football and the representation of the fingers contacts the lacing of the football.

8. The sports ball of claim 1 where the ball is a round ball, and the round ball further includes a second image of a guide hand, the second image being spaced apart from the first hand.

9. The sports ball of claim 8 wherein the image of the guide hand includes three middle fingers and a universal finger on each side of the three middle fingers, where each universal finger can be either a thumb or a pinkie finger, whereby the image of the guide hand represents either a left
5 hand or a right hand.

10. A sports ball including a hand placement guide disposed thereon for indicating proper hand placement for a person's hands for effecting a release of the ball, the guide including:

5 a first image of a release hand including a representation of the hand's palm and fingers;

the representation of the fingers having indicia indicating that the person should release the ball with the three middle fingertips of the release hand.

11. The sports ball of claim 10 further including indicia indicating that one of the fingertips should be the last of the three middle fingertips touching the ball at the end of the release.

5 12. The sports ball of claim 11 wherein the indicia indicates that one of the middle finger and the index finger is the last of the three middle fingers to contact the ball.